



VESSELS OPERATING ON BIOFUELS AND BLENDS THEREOF

Technical Notice MARPOL.12

*Notice to Ship-owners, Ship Operators, Managers, Masters,
Owners' Representatives and Recognized Organizations*

The Directorate wishes to draw the attention of all concerned to the approval of a new unified interpretation (UI) during the 78th session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), related to Regulation 18.3 of MARPOL Annex VI ([MEPC.1/Circ.795/Rev.6](#)).

MEPC.1/Circ.795/Rev.6 provides clarity on the use of biofuels on board ships and possible implications on NOx emissions. The interpretation provides a definition for the term "biofuel", indicating that a fuel oil which is a blend of not more than 30% by volume of biofuel should meet the requirements of Regulation 18.3.1 of MARPOL Annex VI. It is therefore considered to be fuel oil of blends of hydrocarbons derived from petroleum refining and verification of the NOx impacts is not required.

A marine diesel engine certified in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 13 of MARPOL Annex VI, which can operate on a biofuel or a biofuel blend without changes to its NOx critical components or settings/operating values outside those as given by that engine's approved Technical File, should be permitted to use such a fuel oil without having to undertake the assessment as provided by Regulation 18.3.2.2 of MARPOL Annex VI.

For the purposes of this interpretation, parent engine emissions tests undertaken on DM or RM grade fuels to the ISO 8217:2005 standard, as required by paragraph 5.3.2 of the NOx Technical Code, should be valid for all DM or RM grade fuels used in operation, or that the engine may be designed for, or capable of operation on, including those meeting the ISO 8217 standards superseding ISO 8217:2005.

Where fuel oils are derived from methods other than petroleum refining, or fuel oil which is a blend of more than 30% by volume of biofuel and does not fall under 13.2 of this unified interpretation, or other fuels required to undertake the assessment as given by Regulation 18.3.2.2 of MARPOL Annex VI and for which have not been specifically certified in accordance with the Regulation 13 limits at test bed for that specific fuel and Engine Group/Family, the following is interpreted as an acceptable route to demonstrate compliance with Regulation 18.3.2.2, the ship's IAPP Certificate may continue to be issued where the overall NOx emissions performance has been verified to not cause the specified engine to exceed the applicable NOx emissions limit when burning said fuels using the onboard simplified measurement method in accordance with 6.3 of the NOx Technical Code 2008, or the direct measurement and monitoring method in accordance with 6.4 of the NOx Technical Code 2008, or by reference to relevant test-bed testing.

For the purposes of this interpretation and demonstration of compliance with Regulation 18.3.2.2 of MARPOL Annex VI, and as applicable to possible deviations when undertaking measurements onboard, an allowance of 10% of the applicable limit may be accepted.

Merchant Shipping Directorate

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Malta Transport Centre
Hal Lija LJA 2021, Malta

Tel: +356 2125 0360
Email: tech.tm@transport.gov.mt
www.transport.gov.mt/ship-registration



Merchant Shipping Directorate
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